

Buckerell

WATER SUPPLY.

THE PUMP AGAIN.

At the last meeting of the Honiton Rural Council the Clerk (Mr. E. W. Hellier) read a petition signed by Sir James Monteath and a number of ratepayers in reference to Buckerell. The petition stated that in May 1920, there was sent to the Council a protest, unanimously decided upon at a special meeting of the Buckerell Parish Council, against any charge being thrown upon the ratepayers for the supply of water for nine cottages. The supply, it was considered, should be provided by the owners. After a lapse of 18 months the parishioners were still without a reply of any kind. It was observed from newspaper reports that at a recent meeting of the District Council the Sanitary Inspector was instructed to obtain an estimate of the cost of repairing the well and pump that had hitherto supplied the cottages at a cost which it was said would be about £100. It was now found that the work had already been treated with a lack of ordinary courtesy. If it was thought to be a justification for such treatment that the representative of the parish on the Council voted for or did not object to the course adopted they pointed out that he did not attend the Parish Meeting, but, in accordance with another unanimous resolution, was informed in writing that it was considered it was incumbent upon him, as such a representative, to support the view unanimously held by the Parish Meeting. The petitioners, as decided at another meeting, again requested to be informed, as they were entitled to be, with the least possible delay, so as to enable them promptly, if necessary, to appeal to a higher authority, whether it was intended to meet the cost (1) by recovery from the owners of the cottages referred to, or (2) by a levy on the ratepayers. If the former course was intended the matter did not affect them; if the latter they gave notice that they would refuse to pay any additional rate proposed to be levied for the purposes unless there were an authoritative decision that the District Council had legal powers to relieve individual owners of cottages in a country parish from their responsibility to provide a water supply for them and to charge the cost of such supply to the ratepayers. The

petitioners understood that the water of the well in question was considered to be liable to contamination from the graveyard. If so, obviously the proper course was to close the well on sanitary grounds and leave the owners of the cottages the alternative of sinking their own wells, as other owners had to do, or of being unable to let their cottages.

The Chairman, (Mr. S. Tuke) suggested that the Clerk should write the petitioners informing them that the Council's action was perfectly legal, and that it seemed to them they were rather changeable people and did not seem to know what they wanted. (Laughter and hear, hear.)

Mr. A. J. Redfern (Sanitary Inspector) said that when the well was opened up it was found to be considerably worse than he at first imagined. He had difficulty in getting men to go down owing to the danger from the sides falling in. He was trying to cut down the expense as much as possible, but was afraid the cost would exceed £100.

Mr. Willmington (representative for Buckerell) said the woodwork was found to be as rotten as a pear when they came to take it out.